

THE NEW SCHOOLS OF CHINA

HOW THE EDUCATION OF THE
CELESTIAL EMPIRE IS BE-
ING REVOLUTIONIZED.

(Special Correspondence.)
PEKIN, 1909.—I write of the great intellectual movement of all time. This nation of 400,000,000 is starting to school, and thousands of teachers are already at work, beginning to instruct it along the lines of our civilization. The movement was started only four years ago by the great emperor, who at the advice of Yuan Shih Kai, Chang Chi Tung and other progressive statesmen. By an imperial edict, the old system of examinations, under which China has been working for centuries, was wiped off the slate and the new education begun. Now there are colleges in every provincial capital and modern schools in the 4,000 walled cities. A government department of education has been instituted, and over it is one of the great imperial boards. In the new constitution which was issued last year, a system of common schools was provided, and compulsory education along modern lines will be instituted at the earliest possible moment. By that constitution China will have its parliament within eight years from now, and the work of training the people for self-government is to go on by fixed steps from year to year.

The lines of the development of the new education have been carefully laid out. The composition of textbooks began in 1908, and a large number of these will be published this year. In 1910 schools for easy learning will be further extended over the empire, and by 1912 they will be in all the villages and market towns. The work will go steadily on, and in 1916 one Chinese in every 20 will be able to read and write, and will have received some education in our modern civilization.

AN ARMY OF SCHOLARS.
One in twenty? Five per cent. Five per cent of these people means 20,000,000, and this will be the educational army with which China will start on its career under the new constitution. At present not one in a hundred Chinese can read the simplest characters of his language, and it is safe to say that not more than one in 500 has an education along the old lines so advanced as that of our grammar schools. All this is to be changed, and by the next generation it is safe to say that the majority of the people will have gone to school.

I came here from Japan. It is now 20 years since that country began a constitutional movement like this which is now being inaugurated here. I doubt whether education was more advanced there at that time than in China now. Today every boy and girl in the Japanese empire is receiving more or less education, and more than one-tenth of the whole nation is going to school. No one who has not seen the educational awakening of the land of the rising sun can appreciate what such movements mean. Here in China they will be multiplied many fold by the character of the race and its vast population.

CHINA'S NEW SCHOOL.
This movement is fully underway. I found Manchuria stirred up over it, and attended schools of various kinds in the city of Mukden. It is going on in Mongolia and along the borders of Tibet and away down south on the edges of Indo-China. Every governor is pushing it, and every city is organizing new

schools as fast as it can. In Fuchow there are 20 native schools of foreign instruction, also a normal school, a high school and a military school. That city has a police training school, a medical school and a large number of private schools. Tientsin has all sorts of educational institutions, from kindergartens to colleges. I have already written of its half-day and night schools. There are similar ones in Peking, and among them a half-day school for officials who wish to improve themselves along modern lines. This was closed during the 27 days of deep mourning which followed the emperor's death, whereupon one old scholar of 70 objected because it interrupted his studies.

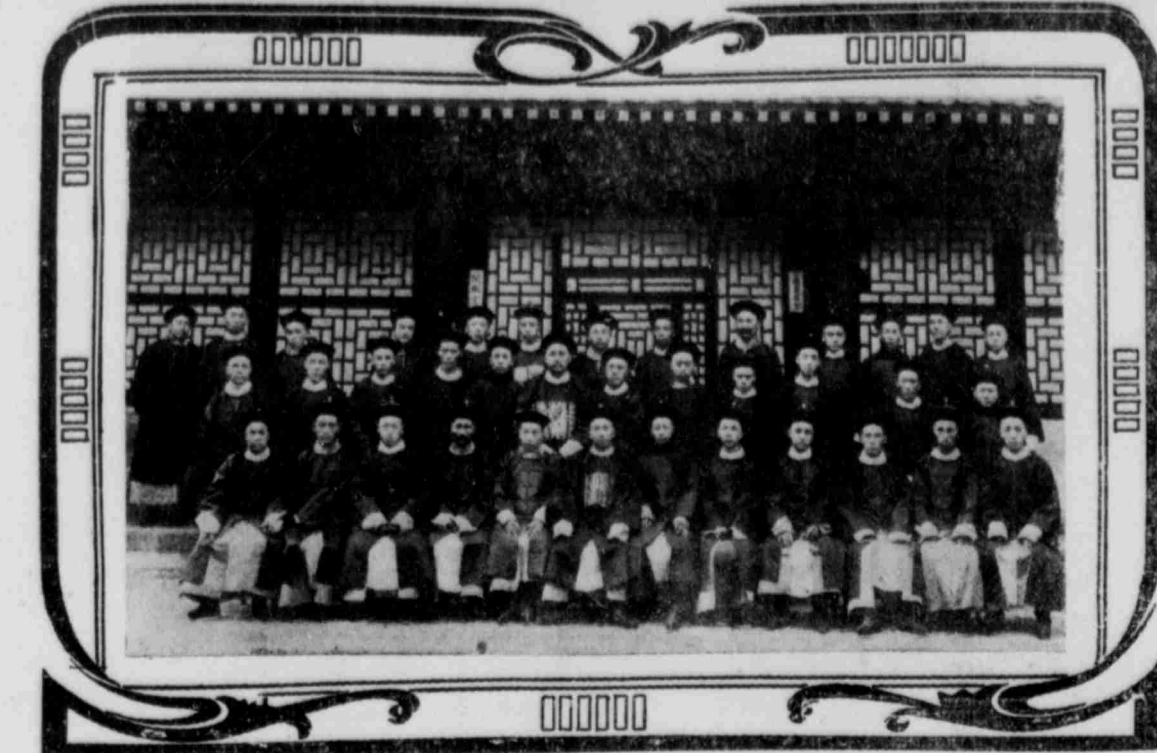
China is establishing industrial schools where the use of modern machinery is taught, and where the boys learn mechanical trades. These are scattered here at the capital, and some are for Tartars alone. The Chinese city has an industrial institute under its board of commerce, which cost 100,000 taels to erect. It was started two years ago, and is now in full swing with 500 students at work. This school teaches 12 industries and it gives a course of three years. In addition to this there are seven other industrial schools in Peking and the Manchus are starting some in the Tartar city.

SOME SCHOOLS OF PEKIN.

Pekin is not so far advanced as Tientsin in the pushing of the new education. Still it has more than 200 new schools, and over 20,000 children and young men are working away in government institutions. The schools begin with kindergartens, which may be attended by children from the ages of three up to seven. At the latter age they enter the second-grade primary schools, where a five-year course is taken, and then the first-grade primary for a four-year course. In these schools they are taught the reading and writing of the Chinese characters and they begin arithmetic, history and geography. In the first stages of their instruction the children study out loud, but instead of sitting on the floor and swaying back and forth, each shouting for himself, as in the past, they now sit on benches and read together with one of them as their leader.

After the primary is passed, the students enter the grammar or intermediate grades. Here they study Chinese, foreign languages, mathematics, geography and history, and also the natural sciences, ethics and drawing. In some schools there are courses in law and political economy. The most of these schools are, as yet, not far advanced, but there are something like 10,000 students attending them in Peking alone, and of them, four or five thousand are Manchus. The Manchus have a nobler school for the sons of high officials who are being prepared for further education abroad. This school has now 200 students.

As to the middle or second grade pri-



IN THE IMPERIAL UNIVERSITY OF PEKIN.

Photographed for The News by Frank G. Carpenter.

mary schools, they are being established by the thousands. Dr. D. T. Tenny, who organized the middle schools of this province several years ago, then instituted over 2,700, with something like 80,000 students, and there are probably one-third more than that number today. This was for the province of Pechihli, in which Peking is situated. A similar work is being more gradually done in each of the other twenty-one provinces of the Chinese empire. High schools and normal schools are now to be found everywhere. According to the regulation every town and city has to maintain one, and every provincial capital must have a normal school of the first grade. These schools are all equipped with chemical, physical and botanical laboratories, and in some of the cities, such as Tientsin, there are also teachers' museums where models and books describing the teaching in foreign countries are exhibited. The normal schools are largely attended by those who wish to fit themselves for work along the lines of the new development.

CHINESE STUDENTS ABROAD.

Many such went to Japan at the time the movement was started, stayed there a year or so and have come back to take their places in the new education. During my stay in Tientsin last year I found something like 5,000 Chinese students in the colleges there. Some were in the Imperial university, some in the teachers' training schools, and others in the military and technical schools. A few were in the law and engineering. Not a few were studying law and medicine, and some politics, economics, history and literature. About one-fifth of the whole, and they were largely made up of men who had stood high in the classes and who expected to come back to China to teach.

I am told that thousands of the "literati" went to Japan at the time it was decided by the government to open up China to the new education, and that especially because the government had said that it would give preference to literary graduates who had such instruction in the selection of its teachers for its new schools. On this account 10,000 went there at once and enrolled themselves. The most of them stayed less than six months and then came back to teach. Nearly all have received appointments and are now acting as professors. They are not fitted for the higher branches of modern instruction; but they believe in the new education, and by this action of the government have been made its supporters instead of its enemies, as they probably would have been had they not been given the chance to teach.

HIGHER SCHOOLS OF PEKIN.

During my stay here in Peking I have visited many of the higher schools and colleges. The city has no law schools, government and medical schools. One of the law schools was founded by Wu Ting-Fang two years ago, and it now has 800 students. It teaches law and government as well as political science, and one may see 500 students there at some of the lectures.

There is also a language school of high grade where Chinese boys are prepared for the foreign office, and for the diplomatic service abroad. This school already has 300 students. It is open to any one who can pass the entrance examinations and give certificates of good character. In addition to the modern languages, the school gives a good academic education along foreign lines. Every boy is required to take at least one foreign language. He may choose either English, French, German or Russian. English is now the most popular, and about 80 students are studying it. French ranks next, and then German, and after them Russian and Japanese.

I visited this school yesterday. It is within the walls of the Imperial city and not far from the Forbidden city in which the emperor lives. I had to go a mile or so around the wall before I reached the gate where the school compound where the college buildings are located. They are of modern style, and of one and two stories. The material is gray brick with doors painted bright blue, making the buildings look cheerful. The school has a campus, drill ground and a large examination hall, where the students sit at tables under the eyes of the instructors and write their essays and answers to the test questions. The examinations usually last about three days. Upon finishing his paper, each student writes his name on a corner in such a place that it can be rolled up and sealed. The paper is then numbered and the judges must pass upon it without knowing to whom it belongs. Only after the decision is made is the name unveiled.

TURNING CHINA UPSIDE DOWN.

As I went through the classrooms of this academy I saw many of the things that are now turning China upside down. Every schoolroom had maps showing that the world is round and not flat or square. On the walls hung maps of the various continents, and some represented China in its proper scale in Asia. These maps are a constant reminder of the big world away from home. They are in strange contradiction to the plans of the world which the Chinese used only a few years ago. The latter represent a vast space devoted to China, with a few patches around the edges. These were the lands of the barbarians, and comprise all of the world that belonged to the rest of mankind. In one classroom I saw a large wall map of the United States, with Boston, St. Louis, New York and Chicago printed in type half an inch long, and in the other rooms were physical maps and others illustrating physical geography. I heard a lecture on ethics delivered in Chinese by a celestial professor, and saw about 22 boys practicing mathe-

matical drawing. In the latter room I asked one of the boys if he understood English. He replied: "Only a little," but added that he was studying German. I then addressed him in German, and found that he could speak the language better than I could. I examined the dormitories to see how the boys live. There are six students to every room of about 12 feet square. The beds are single, and are arranged against the walls at the two ends of the room. In the center is the study table, and about stand the boxes where the young men keep their clothes. There is no privacy, and an American boy could hardly study in such surroundings. Still, the rate for tuition and board is all told less than \$2 a month, and many of the students who have scholarships are charged only for their food. The boys work hard and learn easily.

IN THE PEKIN UNIVERSITY.

From this language academy, in company with Dr. Tenny, the Chinese secretary of our legation, I went to the Imperial University of Peking. This is also in the Imperial city, not far from Coal Hill, in which the emperor was temporarily buried a few months ago. The buildings are altogether Chinese. They are low one-story structures running around paved courts. The walls have large windows of a beautiful work of wood, backed with white paper and the heavy tiled roofs so overhanging that each court has a promenade round it, reminding one of the quadrangles at Oxford. There are many courts and many buildings, and the whole has a college atmosphere quite equal to Princeton, Cornell, Harvard or Yale.

I was especially interested in the library, with its thousands of old Chinese volumes, now mixed with a sparse and scattered collection of books in English, French, German and Russian. The Chinese books are on fine tissue paper, printed in characters like those one sees on the tea boxes. The most of them are bound in paper or cardboard, and some of the works comprise many parts. There is an encyclopedia, for instance, which closely fills a set of shelves 12 feet in height and 30 feet long. It contains over 5,000 volumes and has perhaps 2,000,000 pages. It was printed from blocks within the past five years and each of its characters had to be specially cut. These characters must run high into the millions. This book is only one of about nine encyclopedias which are now in use in China. The most of them are equally voluminous, and all are largely based on the great encyclopedia written during the reign of one of the first Ming emperors. That work contained 22,937 books; it took 22,000 scholars to write it and required fifty volumes for its table of contents. It was never printed, but I understand that the manuscript is still in existence.

In looking at the new encyclopedia I asked one of the professors if it was revised from year to year and kept up to date. He replied that it was, but that extra volumes were added from time to time recording the changes. I doubt seriously if the work is of any value; it will probably soon be consigned to the archives of the old Chinese past.

The Peking university is the same institution which was founded years ago under Dr. W. P. Martin. It was re-

organized after the Boxer rebellion, and it is now teaching the modern languages and sciences, through Japanese and European professors, and the old Chinese literature through Chinese. It is not a university in our sense of the word, but its courses will be added to from now on, and it may some day become one.

COLLEGE ATHLETICS AND SPORTS.

While at this university I saw the students go through their regular afternoon drill. Every boy carried a gun of the most modern make and the companies marched like veteran soldiers. And still they seemed odd. They wore blue uniforms with low-crowned, broad-brimmed hats of sky blue felt. The hats looked as though they came from a millinery store, and as the boys wheeled about and showed their long braided queues, they made me think of girls dressed in boys' clothing.

Nevertheless, they marched well and are learning to shoot. I saw a similar drill at the language school, and in the schools everywhere a constant military training is now required by the government. This is so even in the primary grades, and the result will be that the new education will make the Chinese a nation of soldiers.

It will also give the boys physical development. Athletic sports are now popular in all of the schools. Every playground has its gymnasium, and the students play baseball, football and cricket. There are college meets, over which high officials preside, and the spectators go wild over the 100-yard dash, the pole vault, and the high jump. Not long ago 8,000 competitors entered in an athletic meet at Canton, and at one in Hankow, Chang Chi Tung, a grand counselor of the empire and its most famous scholar, won the pole vault, and the prizes, truly strange things are now going on in this old Chinese empire.

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FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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THE PIAZZA CAT.

The habitat of this ubiquitous animal is any piazza in the summer zone, hence the classification, *Felinus Porchibus*. Her chief occupation is scratching. She is necessarily gregarious, since she never operates upon herself—worse luck—but upon the reputations of those so fortunate as to be of another species. Therefore an assistant with equally long, sharp claws and as gentle a purr is a necessity of her being.

The Piazza cats are usually fed, housed, and kept in extreme idleness by galley slaves known as husbands, who grill in red-hot frying pans called city offices, to fry out the fat of the land upon which the Piazza cats subsist. This process also supplies the unlimited amount of leisure required by *Felinus Porchibus* for scratching purposes.

As is the case with all felines, they can see best in the dark. They have even been known to detect dark deeds that were never committed. They are particularly inimical to fine fabrics; and will destroy in a single afternoon the delicately woven tapestry of a reputation that has taken three generations to produce. The Piazza cat may be known by an unfailing sign to the careful observer of unnatural history—the velvet dulcet quality of her purr. Wise folk can always detect it, and look immediately for the pins in her pin-cushion claws.

There is no remedy for her. Attempts at extermination on the part of press and pulpit are useless, as the galley slaves who breed her are legion—and they are imbued with a wholesome fear of her claws. So, like Ten-

nyson's babbling, burbling, bubbling, ununsalted brook, she goes on forever. The only alleviation to be looked for lies in the hope that, some glorious day, some great scientist, goaded by desperation, will discover an antitoxin which shall destroy her scratchabilities and be called rough on cats.—Success.

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